

LITTLE HOUSE KINDER LEARNING CENTER



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Welcome to Little House Kinder Learning Center Preschool!

VISION STATEMENT

Little House Kinder Learning Center represents a new and most important milestone in the life of you and your child. It is here that socialization skills are further developed and positive attitudes toward learning are fostered.

MISSION

Little House Kinder Learning Center is dedicated to providing a high quality preschool program to effectively meet the needs of children ages 1 year old up to the after school age of 12 years. We believe that preschool is a necessary extension of their future school experiences.

PHILOSOPHY

We, here at Little House Kinder Learning Center achieve this through our twelve month curriculum which encourages children to explore their surrounding world, to think creatively to use all of their senses and to become involved in every facet of learning through developmentally appropriate practices in a safe environment.

LICENSING

Little House Kinder Learning Center is licensed by the State of Florida through Hillsborough County Child Care Licensing. Our License (C HC 431703) is posted on our Parent Information Board located just inside our entry to the right. The license is subject to renewal on a yearly basis; a copy of Hillsborough County Child Care Licensing Regulations is on file at the front desk and is available for parent review upon request.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

TODDLER CURRICULUM SUMMARY

We use the *Infant Toddler Planning Guide curriculum* for our children 12 to 36 months of age. This toddler curriculum emphasizes language experiences and social interactions while preparing children for the structure of a typical preschool day in a smaller group setting. Toddlers engage in active learning activities during the day; activities that are designed to foster growth in all areas of development.

Our toddler curriculum is based on the philosophy that children grow and develop to their fullest potential if given the opportunity to explore, create and problem solve with materials appropriate to their developmental age. The classes provide young children with many experiences: puzzles, books, climbers, puppets, riding toys, and housekeeping props.

We also offer children the opportunity to become involved in the preparation of their snacks, introduce art experiences, sing songs and finger plays, and play group games. The program fosters social and emotional development by providing opportunities for adult/child and child/child interactions. Children this age may not “play with” each other until they are close to three years of age, but will benefit from playing “along side” their peers.

Your child’s age and unique personality will determine how they will respond to the program. Often the younger children and those who are more cautious will observe a while before joining in an activity. An observing child is still learning from the experience.

Group music and story times are held, but participation is optional for the toddlers. Some children are more ready to actively engage in these experiences than others. It is not developmentally appropriate to expect toddlers to sit in a group for story or follow directions in a group music time. Therefore, we provide attractive, stimulating, and developmentally appropriate activities geared to the individual child. Many times snack preparations or rousing marching band tapes and CDs will spontaneously involve all the children because they are truly interested.

Letters and numbers are used in a casual manner. Children will not be taught rote skills but concepts will be reinforced through daily use and exposure. A good sense of language is fostered through poetry, stories and songs; fine motor skills through puzzles, blocks; water play, art, cooking; and gross motor skills through climbing, marching, dancing, riding and pulling toys.

PRE-SCHOOL/VPK CURRICULUM SUMMARY

Little House Kinder Learning Center uses FunShine Online Curriculum, the *Doors to Discovery and DLM* curriculum which is a Pre-kindergarten program that builds a foundation of oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and concepts of print and a love of books. Literacy enriched learning centers provide a child-centered approach throughout the curriculum. Family literacy activities foster partnerships between the school, home, family, and teacher. Through engaging storybooks, enchanting literacy-learning environments, and authentic discoveries, preschoolers are given the “keys” that will open the door to lifelong literacy.

Features:

- Includes key elements of early literacy - Oral Language Development, Phonological Awareness, Alphabet Knowledge, and Concepts of Print
- Correlated to key national, state, and local guidelines, including
 - IRA/NAEYC position paper regarding predictors of literary success
 - High/Scope
 - Creative Curriculum
- Successfully implemented in a variety of early learning classrooms, including Head Start, private child care, public schools, and Early Reading First Centers of Excellence
- Shared Literacy features = Each Exploration included Big Books that focus on fiction, nonfiction, mathematical concepts, and interactive oral language and vocabulary development.
- Developmentally appropriate activities engage children in differentiated learning centers that support literacy
- Opportunities for parallel and integrated family learning activities that enrich, extend, and teach the curriculum, recognizing parents as the first “teachers” of their children
- Outstanding initial training and on-going Professional Development. Wright Group/McGraw-Hill addressed the needs of individual teachers, classroom management, and assessment.
- Assessment strategies are integrated into the *DLM* program.
- Literacy Learning Centers – provide cross-curricular instruction; integration of play/imagination of children and teachers.

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM SUMMARY

Little House Kinder Learning Center offers school-age programming for children in Kindergarten through Fifth Grades; services include before and after school care during the school year and full-day care during school holidays and the summer school break. During the school year we provide transportation on school days from: Bay Crest Elementary School, Dickenson Elementary School & Davis Elementary School to Little House Kinder Learning Center

Our focus is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development while responding to the needs of their family. Our knowledge of basic child development enables us to provide an enriching program with a balance of teacher-directed and child-directed activities and experiences. The school-age curriculum takes into consideration the individual personalities, needs and interests of children in this special age group in order to provide activities that are fun, educational and challenging.

Little House Kinder Learning Center Program Policy Information

ENROLLMENT

Little House Kinder Learning Center has year-round registration; as slots open up for various reasons, enrollment will continue based on the waiting list order and staff availability. Families presently enrolled are given priority to register for the available VPK slots. There is no guarantee of securing a VPK slot if registration is not received by May of the current year. No slot will be held without pre-payment of the registration fee and deposit. Families may withdraw their children from the program at any time (see Withdrawal/Termination of Enrollment for specific policy).

AGE REQUIREMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAMS

TODDLER PROGRAMS	Children enrolled in toddler programs should be 12 months by September 1st of the program year they are to be enrolled in.
PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS	Children enrolled in preschool programs are 3 years to 5 years 11 months. They should be by September 1st of the program year they are to be enrolled in. Generally, we do not move children up in the middle of a program year.; individual considerations may be made if all parties (teaching staff, parents, director) are in 100% agreement.
VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM (VPK)	Children enrolled in voluntary pre-kindergarten programs are 4 years to 5 years 11 months. They should be 4 years old by September 1st of the program year in which they are to be enrolled.
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM	Children enrolled in the after-school program are Kindergarten through fifth grades.

ELEGIBILITY

Little House Kinder Learning Center admits all children regardless of race, color, nationality, or religious background. Little House Kinder Learning Center will make accommodations for children with special needs whenever possible; accommodations are limited to those within the physical and financial capabilities of the Center. Each child in the classroom is entitled to equitable time and attention from the teacher. If and individual child requires a disproportionate amount of teacher's time, that child's parents may have the options of providing an assistant in the classroom or withdrawing their child from the Center. Assistance in the classroom will be under the direction of the classroom teacher and subject to State Licensing requirements.

Waiting List

The Office maintains a waiting list based on the date the application and fee was received. This list consists of names from the pre-enrollment list that did not get placement in the fall and would like to be considered as the program year progresses. New names may also be added for consideration during the year as slots open up for various reasons. There is a non-refundable \$ 25 dollar charge to have a child's name put on this waiting list. This fee will be charged for each new program year. This list is kept from September 1 through August 30 of a given program year for placement during the on-going program year.

Withdrawal/Termination of Enrollment

Full deposit amount will be applied only after a two week written notice is received from the family to withdraw a child from our program. Otherwise families are responsible for full tuition throughout that period. The initial registration fee and deposit will not be refunded if withdrawal occurs after the start of the program. Families that enroll their child but fail to notify Little House Kinder Learning Center in writing of their decision not to attend prior to the first day of the school year will be held liable for the first week of tuition.

At any time during the calendar year, Little House Kinder Learning Center staff may determine that the program is not appropriate for a particular child and request that the child be withdrawn or terminated from enrollment. If that should be necessary, staff will adhere to the following procedures:

- The teaching staff and Director meet concerning the situation.
- The teaching staff and Director meet with parents or guardians.
- If, after meetings and consultation, the decision is reached that the Little House Kinder Learning Center is not appropriate for the child, the child is withdrawn/terminated from enrollment.
- At the family's request, staff assists in finding an appropriate alternative setting for the child.

ADMISSION POLICY

The following enrollment forms **must** be completed and returned to the **Little House Kinder Learning Center** office no later than your child's first day of school:

- Contract
- Child Information Record
- Immunization Record
- Health Appraisal/Physical form (signed by the child's physician)
- Background Information Form
- Audio/Visual Waiver
- Walking Field Trip Waiver (When applies – for summer camp)
- Signature pages from the Parent Handbook.

No child may attend any part of the program without the receipt of the above paperwork. This is a licensing regulation and cannot be waived. Our Safety guidelines require that we are able to reach parents/guardians at any time during the day; for this reason it is imperative that parents/guardians keep enrollment information current: Please inform the office staff of any changes in address, phone numbers, or other emergency contact information as they occur.

TUITION POLICY

Deposit: A deposit of **one week's tuition** is required upon enrollment. The deposit will be used as payment for the last week the child attends the center. **IT IS NOT REFUNDABLE.**

Tuition is paid weekly. **Tuition must be paid on Friday before a new week, if paid online, not later than Sunday midnight. No exceptions made.** The fact that there will be scheduled holidays and absences due to illness has been figured into the overall tuition charges and does not change tuition rates for any week. **Late payments must be accompanied by a \$ 25.00 fee.** Checks are accepted for tuitions and fees; however, if any check is returned for insufficient funds, \$35.00 will be assessed for each check returned. For any checks returned a second time, only money order will be accepted. Little House Kinder Learning Center DOESN'T accept cash as payments.

VACATION TIME:

All **FULL TIME** Children ages 1 thru 5 enrolled are entered to two (2) weeks vacation time during the calendar year. (Week is Monday thru Friday). All Afterschoolers or any Child enrolled in the **PART TIME** basics is entered to one (1) week vacation time during the calendar year. We required in advance two (2) weeks a written note.

We will make an exemption in the case of illness or accident resulting in more than 2 consecutive weeks of absence. For absences in excess of two consecutive weeks, tuition will be credited if a request is made in writing and accompanied by a note from the child’s physician. Tuition credit **cannot** be given for family vacations that do not coincide with the Little House Kinder Learning Center calendar.

NO REFUNDS FOR ABSENCES OR ANY OTHER REASONS

FOR CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, LITTLE HOUSE KINDER LEARNING CENTER MAY NEED TO CLOSE (EG; WATER MAIN BREAK, POWER FAILURE, HURRICANE, ETC.), WE WILL MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO PHONE FAMILIES BEFORE THEIR CHILD’S SHCEDULED ARRIVAL TIME, HOWEVER, NO TUITON REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR THE DAYS THE CENTER IS CLOSED.

In the event of inclement weather, please call (813) 866-6098 for closing information.

Schedule of Tuition and Fees

A non- refundable Registration fee is for full-year and is to be paid at the beginning of each year which begins the 2nd week of August of each year.

Deposit	One week’s tuition required upon enrollment; used as payment for child’s last week. (Non refundable- no money back)
Individual Registration	\$ 60.00
Family Registration	\$ 85.00
Weekly Tuition:	Mon thru Fri
	6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
6 Weeks to 12 months	\$ N/A
12 months to 24 months	\$ 160.00
2 Year & Up (not potty trained)	\$ 145.00
3 Year & Up (potty trained)	\$ 135.00
4 Years & Pre-K. 5 Years	\$ 125.00

VPK Program:

	Mon. thru Fri.	Hours / Services
VPK - FREE	\$ FREE	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Before and After VPK - Full Time	\$ 90.00	6:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 to 6:30 p.m. Breakfast, Lunch and snack are included
Before VPK – Part Time	\$ 40.00	7:30 to 12:00 p.m. Breakfast & Lunch are included

School-Age Weekly Rates:

Before and After School Care	\$ 90.00	(School Year)
After School Care	\$ 85.00	(School Year)
Before School Care	\$ 40.00	(School Year)
Summer & Winter Holyday Rates	\$ 115.00	
One Day Care	\$ 35.00	(School Year)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Families in need of financial assistance are often referred to School Readiness Program (Vouchers). Little House Kinder Learning Center accepts subsidies from this government organization. Please contact the Director or Assistant Director for information.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The center will be open from Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. throughout the year.

Morning sessions – 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Full day schedule – 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The school will be closed on these legal holidays:

- New Year's Day Closed all day
- Memorial Day
- Good Friday
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & the Day After
- Christmas Eve Closed at 2:00 p.m.
- Christmas Day Closed all day
- New Year's Eve Closed at 2:00 p.m.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Schedules vary according to classroom, age group and curriculum. Classes follow the schedule recommended by the curriculum, and are posted inside each classroom for parent review. Basic elements for each group will include:

Toddlers: Breakfast, circle time, projects, outside playtime, lunch, nap, snack, outside playground, stories, centers, music, movement and dismissal.

Pre K/ VPK: Breakfast, circle time, literacy, math and science centers, story time, projects, outside playtime, lunch, nap, snack, outside play, math/science discovery centers, free play, dismissal.

School age: (Morning) Discovery centers, transport to school. (Afternoon) Arrival from school, snack, homework, outside playtime, math/science projects, centers, dismissal.

SIGN-IN / SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

Parents (family members) must sign children into the classroom and out each day. We use "Bright Wheel" Program. Clip boards with sign-in / sign-out sheets are on the office counter for School Readiness ONLY. Remember to advise family members who are not familiar with the process when they are picking up and/or dropping off your child.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM THE CENTER

In the interest of safety, children must stay with parents until safely secured in automobile or taken off of the premises. Children must be encouraged to walk while in the center. Running creates a safety hazard.

Please be advised that the main entrance to the Center is also a fire exit. This entrance is always unlocked from the inside: this means that children can let themselves out easily if not carefully monitored. After pick-up and sign out of your child, please be sure to supervise your child (children) until they are secured in your vehicle.

Staff cannot release children to individuals other than a parent/guardian or persons listed on the *Child Information Record* (emergency card). Parents must inform staff ahead of time if a person listed on the *Child Information Record* will be picking up their child. Staff is required to check that person's identification before release of the child.

In the event that a parent must send someone other than the person listed on the *Child Information Record*, a written note indicating the date, the name of the person who will be picking up the child and the parent/guardian's signature of authorization must be handed directly to Little House Kinder Learning Center Staff BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF THE CHILD. FOR SAFETY PURPOSES, Phone notification or notes delivered by the unauthorized person CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. At pick-up staff will release the child after checking proper identification to match the name given by the parent/guardian.

In the event of an emergency (due to illness, weather, or other circumstances), staff will call each child's parent/guardian to pick up the child. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will call an authorized contact person(s) listed on the *Child Information Record* completed at the time of enrollment and updated as necessary.

EARLY DROP-OFF POLICY

If a parent arrives with their child before the beginning of the session, they must remain with that child until the program officially begins. This will insure that we stay in compliance with ratio guidelines from the Licensing Agency.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

If a child is picked up later than their scheduled time, the following procedures will be followed:

- 1st occurrence – verbal notification of late pick-up policy.
- 2nd occurrence – written notification of late pick-up policy.
- 3rd occurrence – A \$1 per minute charged. Little House Kinder Learning Center's clock time will be used for this calculation. We will start billing after the scheduled pick-up time and the invoice will be sent the next business day by email. This payment MUST BE CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD ONLY (NO CASH ACCEPTED)

NO EXEPTION WILL BE MADE IT

LATE DROP-OFF POLICY

Staff set aside a time each day for welcoming children and easing their transition into classroom activities. It is not possible for staff to stop scheduled classroom activities in order to greet children and ease separation issues after this time. Late drop-off is very disruptive to the child, the class and often has adverse effects on program quality for all involved. Please make every effort to comply scheduled starting times for your child's session.

In order to maintain the integrity of our program and the importance of all parts of the daily routine, the following late drop-off policy will be implemented:

- Morning session begins at 9:00 AM – no child will be accepted into the Center after 10:00 AM unless prior approval was given.

If a child is dropped off later than their scheduled time without prior notification, the following procedures will be followed:

- 1st occurrence – verbal notification of late drop-off policy.
- 2nd occurrence – written notification of late drop-off policy.
- 3rd occurrence – child will not be accepted into the Center for that session.

In rare cases of important appointments or unavoidable situation, late drop-off can be cleared with the Director. Prior notification of late drop-off is expected.

ATTENDANCE

If your child will be absent, please call the office at (813) 886-6098. If leaving a message, please give the following information: the child's name, date and reason for absence and whether or not your child has a fever. Be as specific as possible. The office staff will inform the classroom teachers. If your child will be absent from the program but is not sick, please call the number above to advise us of his absence. This information is greatly appreciated.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

It is very common for young children to be anxious when separated from parents. Children need to be assured that separation will result in a reunion. **Please, say good-bye to your child when you leave** and if necessary reassure them of your return. Each child is unique – the center will work to ease separation anxiety issues based on individual child and family needs. Little House Kinder Learning Center staff is eager to find strategies that will assist in a smooth transition from home to school for you and your child. Parental and family input is extremely helpful and welcomed. Feel free to call the classroom to check on your child after a difficult separation. Parents are welcome to stay as long as they wish at any time.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Little House Kinder Learning Center is committed to working in partnership with families. We strongly encourage them to participate in every aspect of their child's program. Parents and family members are welcome to visit the Center at any time and are encouraged to contribute to or be involved in their child's classroom activities. Teachers will periodically offer special invitations to classroom activities or events, but parents and family members (including grandparents, aunts or uncles) are invited to be involved in their child's classroom routines (such as reading a story, assisting with learning center activities or art experiences, or assisting with meal-time routines). Parents are also encouraged to share family interests, cultural background, hobbies, talents, etc., as this provides a valuable addition to our curriculum.

CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS, AND OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Birthdays are special occasions for preschoolers. Birthdays are celebrated in the classroom on the school day closest to the child's special day. **FOOD, GOODY BAGS, AND BALLOONS ARE NOT PERMITTED.** *Why?* With the increase of food allergies, we take seriously the responsibility of respecting and protecting the children. Goody bags often contain items that could be dangerous to a younger sibling and balloons are a choking hazard. Throughout the year, teachers offer many different ways of celebrating in their classrooms. **Teachers will work closely with parents in planning celebrations that respect and protect the young children in our school. FOOD MUST BE REQUESTED BY THE TEACHER (any food brought to the center without a teacher request will not be served).** Parents and family members are always welcome to join in our school celebrations; we also encourage parents to share information regarding their family customs and celebrations with the school so that we can reinforce these in the classroom.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is extremely important at Little House Kinder Learning Center. **PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THIS HANDBOOK THOROUGHLY. You must sign off on the last page indicating your understanding of Little House Kinder Learning Center policies and procedures as stated in this handbook. Please notify the Director if you have questions regarding any of the information in this Handbook, or require interpretation in your language.**

From time to time you will receive notices, newsletters, classroom news, etc. These communications should answer many of your questions and keep you informed of upcoming events and classroom "happenings." If you still have questions or concerns, please feel free to direct them to your child's teacher or the Director. If you have a concern regarding your child, please set up an appointment to speak to the teacher or Director in private. Parents are encouraged to frequently check the Parent Bulletin Board (to the right of the Center exit door) where we post current community events, information and support opportunities that may be of interest to parents.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information regarding families and children is confidential and will not be released unless written authorization is provided by the parent/guardian of the child.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN

Little House Kinder Learning Center will use Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) to screen all children for developmental progress with parent permission; parent input is involved in this screening process. If developmental concerns arise parents will be notified and referred to the professional agencies such as School Readiness for further screening. For VPK students we use VPK Assessment tools 3 times a year and results are shared with parents. Teachers will use learning assessment tools that come with their respective curriculums for documenting children's progress in the classroom. These assessments along with classroom observations, samples of students work and anecdotal records will be used to determine children's progress during the school year. This is the information that teachers will use at conferences.

CONFERENCES

Our staff regularly communicates with parents / guardians on an informal basis, using in-person conversations at drop-off and pick-up, telephone calls, and letters. Our staff encourages parents to visit the program and participate in program activities at all times.

Individual (formal) conferences are available by appointment at any time during the school year. Parents of children who will be moving on to a kindergarten program the following year will be offered conference times starting in early spring.

If you have any suggestions, issues, or ideas for improvement, please put them in writing. We welcome ideas that will help us improve our program.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

If a parent/guardian / family member has a grievance, the following steps should be taken:

- Talk over the problem with the head teacher / primary contact (primary caregiver). Please schedule a meeting with the teacher for this purpose. Pick-up and drop-off times are for social interactions and are often hectic.
- If discussion does not resolve the issue, the parent should submit the complaint in writing to the Program Director. Depending on the area of complaint, the director may share this letter with related parties.
- A meeting with the Director, parent / guardian, and teaching team will be scheduled.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Respectful, trusting relationships between children and adults are the foundation of Little House Kinder Learning Center policies. Our teachers strive to help children develop a sense of independence, confidence and competence in their own abilities and to get along with peers. Our staff uses positive, guiding communication to encourage children to develop self-control, identify and manage feelings, solve conflicts, develop empathy for others and find rewards in cooperative social behavior.

Prevention is also an important strategy in dealing with challenging behavior. Teachers set clear, consistent limits; rules for appropriate behavior are posted or illustrated in the classrooms. Schedules, curriculum components and the environment are arranged to avoid problem situations. In order to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behaviors, staff expectations are tailored to fit the development levels of the children. Teachers also receive on-going staff training in the area of positive approaches to discipline and strategies to use with challenging behaviors.

The goal of discipline is not to punish, but rather to help children learn appropriate behavior. General strategies for guiding children to develop positive behaviors include:

- Positive statements which tell the child the correct thing to do. For example: “Turn the pages carefully”, rather than “Don’t tear the book!”
- Positive redirection to clarify when and where a certain behavior is acceptable. For example: “Save your running until we go outside” instead of “No running inside!”
- Accepting feelings and guiding children to express anger and frustration in acceptable ways, such as using words, tearing newspaper, or pounding play dough or a pillow.
- Separating the behavior from the child, relaying the message that “I like and accept you, but I do not like what you did.”
- Recognizing and reinforcing appropriate behaviors by using a smile, sticker charts, “thank you”, or other words of encouragement, such as “Let’s try it together.”

In social interactions, teachers will use the following steps to assist children in developing problem solving and conflict mediation skills:

- Approach child(ren) calmly, stopping any hurtful actions
- Acknowledge children’s feelings
- Gather information from children
- Restate the problem(s)
- Ask for ideas for solutions from the children involved and choose one together
- Be prepared to give follow-up support

Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns regarding classroom or behavior management with the Lead Teacher and/or Director. Good communication between home and school will help us to analyze possible reasons for behavior problems and make possible accommodations and adjustments in the classroom. Teachers may offer the child choices, try to redirect activity, point out logical consequences of behavior, or help the child to problem solve. We give hugs and words of encouragement whenever possible.

The following practices are **NEVER** employed at Little House Kinder Learning Center (these are in accordance to licensing regulations):

- spanking or any form of physical punishment
- ignoring the child as a form of withholding comfort, contact, needed interaction
- threatening
- humiliating - belittling
- yelling
- embarrassing
- insulting
- teasing
- using extrinsic reward strategies
- withholding food or rest
- shaming
- scaring or intimidating
- isolated time-out

Sometimes a child may display individual needs that are beyond the scope of our program and /or the expertise of the teachers. If the child’s teacher and the director feel that s/he would benefit from additional services, they will notify the parents and make recommendations. Behavioral problems that result in injury to other children or adults or require excessive one-on-one staffing to prevent frequent disruptions of the group routines are responded to as outlined in the Referral/Termination Policy of the Preschool.

BITING POLICY

Biting might be a common behavior observed in young children as they learn to cope with their feelings and environment. Biting occurs for a variety of reasons and is most common in children from nine months through 30 months. Generally, children over the age of three have developed more appropriate ways to communicate. Therefore, when children over the age of three bite, our concern is heightened.

While biting during the toddler years may be common it is upsetting to parents and caregivers when it occurs. The goal of our policy is to eliminate the child’s undesirable behavior and to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our program by adhering to the following guidelines:

Biting incidents in the classroom will be recorded and tracked for frequency and cause. Parents will be notified, offered printed information on the topic of the biting behavior, and given the opportunity to conference with the teacher and administration.

- **If a bite breaks the skin**, a parent will be called and asked to remove their child for the remainder of the day to break the cycle of biting.
- **If chronic biting is determined, a parent conference will be scheduled** (when a child bites multiple times a day and/or multiple days in a short period of time). The purpose of the meeting will be to work on strategies in the classroom and at home.
- **If chronic biting does not improve**, two options will be presented to the parent:
 1. The parent can either spend the next few days in their child's classroom shadowing their child or the child will be temporarily suspended from the center.
 2. If all attempts fail to provide a solution, the director may recommend that the child is removed from the center.

STUDENT REFERRAL / TERMINATION POLICY

Referral Meeting with Parent(s): Parents will be notified of all concerns and ongoing developments by either the teacher or the director. A parent conference(s) will be scheduled as soon as possible to discuss the concerns. Parents will be given, in writing: the reason(s) for recommending additional services, a brief summary of the Preschool's observations related to the referral, and any efforts the Preschool made to accommodate the child's needs. The Director or Lead Teacher will also provide the parents with specific referrals to resources and services in the community. It is the parent's responsibility to share pertinent information with their child's teacher, to follow through on the referral recommendation, and to request additional conferences with the teachers as they feel this is needed.

Termination is always a last resort action which is carried out only when the Director and Teachers feel that such action is in the best interest of the child or the other children enrolled. If the Preschool is unable to meet the needs of the child and/or family, every effort will be made to refer the parent to a more appropriate program for their child.

The circumstances under which a child may be terminated are explained below:

1. The child exhibits extremely aggressive behavior which endangers other child and/or staff.
2. The child's health and safety at the Preschool cannot be assured due to circumstances such as impulsive, risk-taking behavior.
3. Unwillingness of the parent(s) to work with teachers in the management of their child's behavior, and/or refusal to follow the Preschool's recommendations for outside support services.
4. The child's developmental needs are not being met at the preschool due to general immaturity. Behavior indicative of a child's immaturity may include severe ongoing separation issues, excessive need for teacher attention, and inability to function independently or with the group.
5. Nonpayment of tuition.
6. Continued lateness of parents dropping off and picking up their child.
7. Parent's display of inappropriate behavior towards staff or children. May include: Disrespectful language, disregarding program policies, verbal and/or physical harassment or any unlawful behavior.
8. Falsifying information on child enrollment forms.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH/SNACK

The Center provides a hot lunch that meets State licensing standards and USDA Guidelines for nutrition on Monday through Friday : this includes 2 servings of vegetable, fruit or juice, 1 serving of grains (bread, rice or pasta), 1 serving of meat (beef, pork, chicken, fish, tofu or beans) and 1 serving of dairy (cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt). You must pack a nutritious lunch for your child if they are scheduled to bring lunch. Insulated lunch boxes and frozen packs help keep lunch foods and drinks cold until lunchtime. **Frozen packs or "blue ice" must be included in your child's lunch container.** Lunches will not be refrigerated. If your child likes a hot lunch, a thermos can be used to keep items warm or teachers will heat up for the children.

Little House Kinder Learning Center will provide healthy snacks for the children. A specific goal of the Center is to bring more awareness to nutritional issues for young children. The daily snack is included on the lesson plan posted on the Parent Communication Board in each classroom. Parents are required to inform the Center of any food allergies for their child by listing them on the enrollment form; allergy lists are posted in every classroom and the kitchen area. It is also recommended that parents to check the allergy list in their child's classroom for accurate information and discuss allergy information with the child's teacher. We will either accommodate children's special needs or arrange for parents to bring an appropriate snack for your child.

Little House Kinder Learning Center encourages parents to only send foods of nutritional value such as fresh fruits and vegetables; please avoid foods that are high in sugars. Children are not allowed to bring candy or chewing gum into the center.

Please do not send additional food or snacks in lieu of breakfast.

Should we enroll children with extreme peanut allergy it may be necessary to convert to a "no peanut center". NO PEANUT BUTTER OR PRODUCTS THAT CONTAIN PEANUTS OR NUTS will be allowed in the Center. Peanut allergies can be severe enough to be affected by airborne oils and can pose life-threatening results for children with allergies.

If a child brings a food item to the Center that contains nuts or has been manufactured in a facility that produces items that contain nuts, the item will be sent home, unopened, with an attached note. The child will then be given a substitute item.

State law dictates that home-made treats, snacks or food items CANNOT be served to children in the Center; foods that are prepared in the home can only be served/eaten by the child of that family. All foods and snacks that are brought to the Center to be shared must be purchased from a licensed bakery (Publix, Wal-Mart, etc.) and be in the original, unopened packaging from that bakery. For suggestions of what foods can be brought into the classroom to share, please speak with the Program Director.

NAPPING / SLEEPING / RESTING

If your child is enrolled in a full day program there will be a nap / rest / quiet time scheduled after lunch time. Little House Kinder Learning Center staff respect and accommodate each child's need to sleep or rest when tired and to wake up on their own when rested. Staff uses these specific strategies at rest time:

- Schedule nap time around each child's individual needs (to the extent possible)
- Begin the next part of the daily routine in such a way that children are free to join in gradually as they awake and feel ready.
- Provide comfort and contact as needed.
- Help children settle down to nap or rest.
- Provide quiet alternatives for non-sleepers.
- Provide for children's various styles of settling down and waking up.

Parents will provide napping materials which include: blanket, pillow. These items should be brought home each week for laundering. Little House Kinder Learning Center Staff will insure that each nap cot is properly sanitized after each use. Staff also arrange each cot in such a manner that there is free and direct means of egress.

Parent communication and information concerning sleeping rituals and schedules are important to us. Please provide any pertinent information to your child's teacher. It is important to remember that regardless of parent requests, sleep will never be withheld from children who appear tired or who ask for a nap.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Please be sure your child has the following items for school:

- A complete change of clothing in a bag labeled with the child's name. Children should wear clothing that they can get messy while they play.

- Children who attend the full-day program should bring a cloth nap bag containing a pillow, blanket, and possibly a favorite stuffed animal. All items should be labeled with the child's name. Nap bags should be taken home weekly for laundering.
- Outerwear appropriate for the weather – including boots, hats, mittens, etc. Unless the weather is unduly cold, windy or otherwise dangerous, children play outside each day.
- Sunscreen, insect repellent, diapering ointments (if necessary).
- Diapers and wipes; please clearly label packages.

**Toys and items from home should not be brought to the classrooms. If a child would like to bring something to show, he/she should be encouraged to leave it in the cubby after showing. We work to ensure that toys are sanitized regularly – if items are brought from home, we cannot assure sanitation.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are NOT taken throughout the year for preschooler programs

ILLNESS / INFESTATIONS

Parents / guardians are expected to keep sick children at home (signs of illness, listed below). If a child is not well enough to participate in the daily routine or play outside, they should not come to school. Little House Kinder Learning Center does not have sufficient staff to provide supervision of one child indoors or outdoors.

If a child becomes ill while at the Center (for example, with a fever, cold, flu, stomach ache, etc.) the following steps will be taken:

- A Parent/guardian will be called and asked to pick up the child. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the person(s) designated on the *Child Information Record* completed at the time of enrollment will be contacted.
- The child will be kept as comfortable as possible in an isolated area of the room and monitored by staff until a parent or other designated individual arrives.

Children **MAY NOT** come to school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (*over 100.4*)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Discharges of the eyes or ears
- Heavy nasal discharges
- Persistent cough
- Unidentified rash

Children must be free of symptoms and fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the Center. A child may return after being on antibiotics for 24 hours. Staff will discuss with parents/guardians any reasonable restriction of children's activities due to illness/injury.

If your child has been diagnosed as having a contagious disease or illness (such as pink eye, impetigo, chicken pox, strep throat, etc.) please notify the Center immediately. Children with contagious illnesses should be kept at home until a doctor verifies that the period of contagion is past. In the event that there is a confirmed case of a contagious illness in the Center, parents will receive notification regarding possible exposure and symptoms; Staff will also post notices in highly visible places throughout the Center. Other families and staff appreciate your providing this information.

A child who exhibits symptoms of head lice (pediculosis) or nits will be excluded from the classroom until:

- The child has received the appropriate treatment (prescribed shampoo).
- There are no lice or nits on the child's head or hair.
- The child has been seen by a public health department professional or physician and a letter from a physician stating that the child is free of lice or nits has been procured and returned to the Center.

MEDICATION

If your child is taking medication, please send the prescription medication to school in the original container with the current prescription label. You will also need to fill out a form authorizing us to administer the medication. These forms are located in each of the classrooms. Only head teaching staff is allowed to dispense medications. At no time will assistant staff do this. Little House Kinder Learning Center cannot administer medication with an out-of-date prescription label or medication with another name on the prescription. We cannot defer from the instructions on the prescription label without a note from the child's doctor. Little House Kinder Learning Center can only administer non-prescription medication with an accompanying note from the doctor giving guidelines as to when to administer the medication and what dosage. Licensing requires that medicines be kept in a locked location out of the reach of children; therefore medicines cannot be kept in a child's backpack or cubby. Please hand all medications directly to your child's teacher.

ALLERGIES AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

In the child's enrollment packet, there are "Child Information Cards." On these cards there is a section on which parents should list any allergies or medical conditions their child may have. As children are enrolled this information is compiled and posted in classrooms and the kitchen so that all staff is aware of allergy issues and unsafe conditions for individual children. If you have more information on your child's allergies or medical conditions, please communicate this to the head teachers as well as the front office. In the case of severe allergies which require the use of an Epi-Pen, we will ask parents to complete an Allergy Action Plan for the child which will be posted in the classroom. Like other prescription medications, Epi Pens must come with the original updated prescription. Your child's teacher or the Director will supply this form to you.

INJURIES

The safety of the children is important to us. Full time teaching staff is required to be certified in Child CPR and Basic First Aid. If a child suffers an injury while at the Center, the staff member present at the scene will complete an accident report. The child's parent is required to sign the accident report when they pick up their child. (The parent keeps the original and the copy goes in Little House Kinder Learning Center files). Parents will be contacted immediately in the event of a head injury. In case of a serious injury, we will call 911 or an ambulance will be summoned to the scene.

Each classroom has a first-aid kit as required by Florida Licensing. All Little House Kinder Learning Center staff is trained in First Aid, Blood-borne Pathogens and CPR.

MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Our staff monitors the condition and safety of indoor and outdoor play equipment on an ongoing basis. If any equipment is found to be in disrepair and presents a hazard to children, staff, or visitors, staff do whichever of the following is appropriate:

- Repair the item if feasible
- Report the hazard to the Director
- Secure approval from Director to remove or replace item if it cannot be repaired

When reports are made to the Director, decisions will be made as to the disposal or repair of equipment. If repair is required, the Assistant Director will issue appropriate work orders. Hazardous items awaiting repair or replacement are removed or placed out of reach or harm's way.

STORAGE AND HANDLING OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

All hazardous materials (including cleaning supplies) are stored away from food, out of the classroom and out of the reach of children. Exceptions (such as diluted bleach solution used for sanitation of surfaces and toys in the classroom) are placed in areas that are not accessible to the children and not in the proximity of food.

SANITATION

Toys and Equipment

Teachers and assistant staff are responsible for regularly washing and sanitizing classroom toys and equipment. (Toys and items from home should not be brought into the classroom because sanitation cannot be assured).

Food Preparation and Clean-Up

Staff store food in clean and closed containers at room temperature or in the refrigerator, as appropriate. Food that has been served but not eaten is discarded. Staff are responsible for sanitizing all dishes, food preparation, and meal surfaces. Staff follow hand washing procedures before and after food preparation and after food clean-up.

HAND WASHING

All staff, visitors, parents and family members are asked to wash hands when entering a classroom and interacting with children and materials.

Staff and children use the following hand washing procedures:

- Wash hands with soap and running water
- Dry hands on paper towel
- Turn faucet off using the paper towel (do NOT touch faucet with clean hands!)
- Dispose of paper towel without using it on any other body part or surface of any play items or equipment

Hand washing procedures are used at times of food preparation, diapering, and toileting, when exposed to bodily fluids (sneezes or runny noses), after outdoor play, sand/water play or messy activities and at other times when sanitation is deemed appropriate for the health and safety of children, other staff, or visitors.

DIAPERING

Diapers shall be disposable and provided by the parent/guardian. If a child's health condition necessitates that disposable diapers cannot be used, an alternative arrangement may be made according to the parents' or a licensed physician's instructions. Diapering shall be done in a designated diapering area. Little House Kinder Learning Center will maintain a diapering area, and all supplies and equipment required for diapering in a safe and sanitary manner. Staff shall wear protective gloves when diapering. Gloves are to be disposed of immediately after each diaper change. Staff shall thoroughly wash hands after each diapering, and after cleaning up bodily fluids, using soap and running water. Paper towels used in diapering shall not be used subsequently on another part of the body or for any other purpose.

Children's diapers will be changed whenever soiled or wet. Diaper checks are done every two hours at a minimum.

TOILET TRAINING / TOILETING

Toilet training shall be planned cooperatively between the child's primary caregiver and the parent/guardian so that the toilet routine established is consistent between Little House Kinder Learning Center and the child's home. At a minimum, it shall include washing hands after toilet use. Staff will sanitize all training devices immediately after each use.

If a child requires assistance in using the toilet, staff will dispose/laundry any paper towels, toilet tissue or clothing that is soiled. In the event that a child soils his/her clothes, staff will promptly assist the child in changing into dry clothes. Parents are required to keep a complete change of clothes at the center at all times. Soiled clothes are bagged and sent home with the parent/guardian for laundering. Staff follows hand washing procedures after assisting children with toileting or changing soiled clothing, then assists children with handwashing.

***PLEASE BE SURE TO CLEARLY LABEL EACH AND EVERY ITEM THAT IS BROUGHT INTO THE CENTER. STAFF IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEMS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN LABELED.**

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PLANS

Fire drills are conducted with children once a month: storm drills are conducted twice a year. Fire and storm drill logs are kept in the center's office. Emergency evacuation and shelter in place plans are posted in highly visible areas in each classroom.

Little House Kinder Learning Center has a detailed Emergency Procedures Plan in the event of any situation that may require evacuation, lock down or shelter in place. Please check in the office if you would like a copy of this plan. It is continuously reviewed by staff and updated / revised in order to be proactive when dealing with the safety of all children and staff.

Little House Kinder Learning Center Parent Handbook

SIGN- OFF SHEET

(This form must be signed by parents/guardians and returned to the school office before the child can attend any Little House Kinder Learning Center Program.)

A copy of this parent's handbook is founded at: www.littlehousekinder.com

Little House Kinder Learning Center Staff welcomes you to our early childhood educational program. We strive to do the very best for young children in our care. Please stay in communication with us. Open communication with families is one of the very best ways to enhance your child's early learning experience.

I have received, read, understand and will comply with all of the policies and procedures in the Little House Kinder Learning Center Parent Handbook. I understand that the Parent Handbook is a working document and updates to policies may occur throughout the school year. I agree to abide by any updates made throughout the school year.

Parent / Guardian Name: _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____